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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001446

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SMIG](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: G/TIP MILLER MEETS DUTCH FOREIGN AND JUSTICE
MINISTERS WHO RESPOND TO CONTINUING ACTION PLAN

REF: SECSTATE 115541

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY

1. During a June 7 meeting with G/TIP Director Miller, Dutch Foreign Minister Bot and Justice Minister Donner acknowledged a shared commitment for concrete action against Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Although critical of the tone and unilateral nature of the U.S. benchmarks outlined in the TIP Continuing Action Plan (reftel) and insistent on tackling the problem in their own way, the Ministers agreed clear guidelines to measure progress in fighting TIP were desirable. Both sides agreed to continue their dialogue on TIP in a constructive manner and expressed confidence we would come to a solution.

MILLER MEETING WITH FOREIGN AND JUSTICE MINISTERS

2. The Secretary is considering Tier 1 placement for the Netherlands in the 2004 TIP Report, with a re-assessment in November 2004. At the direction of the Deputy Secretary, G/TIP Director John Miller visited The Hague June 7. With Amb. Sobel, he met with Dutch Foreign Minister Bot and Justice Minister Donner to discuss the quantifiable, specific benchmarks in the TIP Continuing Action Plan (reftel) on which the Dutch will be evaluated in November. Other U.S. participants included G/TIP Acting Deputy Director JoAnn Schneider, EUR/PGI Doug Hoyt, DCM Danny Russel, and Global Issues officers Drew Mann and Erin Webster-Main. Dutch participants were P.P. (Peter) van Wulfften Palthe, MFA DG of Regional Policy and Consular Affairs, Arie Ijzerman, MoJ Director of International Criminal Affairs & Drugs Policy, and Marjo Cromptvoets, MFA Senior Policy Advisor on Judicial and Police Cooperation.

3. The initial reception by the Dutch was cold with considerable push back. Both Ministers Donner and Bot criticized the harsh tone of the benchmarks and the apparent unilateral imposition of U.S. TIP priorities upon the Dutch. FM Bot said this is not how sovereign nations should deal with each other. He acknowledged the terrible scourge of TIP and reiterated the Dutch commitment to eradicate the problem. Still, as a sovereign country, Bot said, the Netherlands would tailor its TIP approach to national circumstances and priorities. For example, Donner noted the benchmarks laid a heavy emphasis on licensed brothels in the Amsterdam Red Light District, when a more pressing concern for the Dutch was the phenomenon of lover boys preying on minors, against which the Dutch had undertaken information campaigns and increased prosecutions.

4. Mr. Miller first reviewed the possibility of the Secretary doing a conditional Tier 1 placement to be reassessed in November and listed the conditions we felt necessary to maintain that rating in our evaluation. He expressed G/TIP's view that the Dutch decision to legalize prostitution and maintain a sex industry with zones like the

Amsterdam Red Light District created a magnet for TIP crimes. As such, the Dutch shouldered special obligations to rid the legalized sector of TIP victims. The Ministers agreed a link existed between prostitution and trafficking, but they distinguished the two activities and stated that licensing and regulating prostitution was, in fact, a Dutch effort to stop TIP. The Ministers questioned whether G/TIP's focus on legalized prostitution exceeded the Trafficking Victims Protection Act mandate.

15. Both Mr. Miller and the Ministers agreed the goal is to reduce the number of TIP victims and increase the number of trafficker prosecutions. In fact, both countries share many similar tactics in their fight against TIP. Mr. Miller and the Ministers acknowledged several of the steps indicated in the benchmarks were, in fact, already being undertaken by the Dutch.

16. Noting the common ground between the two countries in shared goal and means, Amb. Sobel stressed the need for a continued real time dialogue on TIP issues. Rather than relying upon proclamations and gestures, everyone recognized the importance of establishing concrete, measurable targets in the TIP effort. Bot and Donner agreed, noting that progress against TIP is made at the street level, not the paper level and the Dutch plan to deal with TIP issues in the expanded EU during the Dutch Presidency. Donner affirmed that national and EU-wide progress on TIP was a top Dutch priority and urged that we move forward together on solutions and avoid problems of tone. The meeting ended with the promise by both sides to continue talking.

17. After the meeting, Mr. Miller indicated to the Amb. and DCM alternative benchmarks might be acceptable, but the Deputy Secretary required conditions as substantial, specific and measurable as the benchmarks outlined in the Continuing Action Plan. Mr. Miller said he could accept such clearly defined and measurable alternative benchmarks developed jointly by the Dutch and U.S. (including G/TIP) if done quickly (i.e., within a month).

OTHER MEETINGS

18. Prior to his meeting with the Ministers, Mr. Miller toured De Roggeveen Shelter for victims of domestic violence and trafficking. He discussed the need for improvements in the government's B-9 status (e.g., allowing TIP victims to work) with the shelter's social workers. Following the shelter visit, Mr. Miller met two former TIP victims who had started Atalantas, an NGO working to inform other victims of their rights under Dutch law. They spoke of their particular efforts to focus more attention on victims rather than prosecutions by reaching out directly to them, former to current victim.

19. In another meeting, the National Rapporteur told Mr. Miller of several areas of progress since their last meeting in September - a new joint investigative team involving German, Belgian, Bulgarian, Dutch, EUROPOL and EUROJUST officials to combat TIP; and an EU twinning project with the U.K. in the Czech Republic. She said her third report would likely be released during the summer (to include 2002 figures - final 2003 figures are expected shortly after its publication). Mr. Miller also met with Rob Coster, National Police Project Leader for Prostitution and TIP, who discussed the shift in police focus from the legal to the illegal prostitution sector (including escort services). Coster also clarified the Dutch were re-allocating 100 detectives from the regional level up to the national level to deal more effectively with transnational crimes such as TIP. Coster echoed the National Rapporteur's remarks that the Netherlands was instituting new TIP demand reduction programs. Finally, a police tour of Amsterdam's Red Light District after the meeting with the Ministers revealed that police checked all legal brothels for TIP victims once every six weeks on average.

COMMENT

110. Embassy believes the next step is a strong push for prompt joint development of clear, measurable benchmarks that closely conform to domestic Dutch realities. This will help ensure continued bilateral, shoulder-to-shoulder cooperation in the fight against TIP, and hopefully ease Dutch pre-occupation with the process of producing our yearly report. Minister Bot committed the Dutch to attack TIP during their upcoming EU presidency. With continued bilateral engagement, the U.S. and the Netherlands will be able to multiply our individual efforts against TIP at a time when EU border policies are under review and its enlarged borders increase the risk of trafficking.

111. G/TIP Director Miller has reviewed and cleared this cable.
SOBEL